

MINUTES  
MUNCIE COMMON COUNCIL  
300 NORTH HIGH STREET  
MUNCIE, INDIANA 47305



**AUGUST 1, 2022**

**REGULAR MEETING:** 7:00 P.M., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor City Hall Auditorium.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Led by Rick Yencer.

**INVOCATION:** A Moment of Silence for the string of victims from the senseless crimes that have taken place throughout our community. Muncie saw seven homicides in a span of 19 days. It has been heartbreaking to read the news the past month so please keep them in your thoughts.

**CITIZEN RECOGNITION:** No recognition this month, although, next month will be Councilwoman Selvey presenting the award.

<b>ROLL CALL:</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Aaron Clark	X	
Ro Selvey	X	
Troy Ingram	X	
Jeff Green	X	
Jeff Robinson	X	
Brandon Garrett	X	
Brad Polk	X	
Jerry Dishman	X	
Roger Overbey	X	

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** A motion was made by Green and seconded by Ingram to Approve the Minutes from July 11, 2022. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. MINUTES APPROVED.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Councilman Polk explains the Redistricting Committee met on July 27, 2022 and had discussion regarding attempts to work through the numbers to see what they could come up with on their own. However, they could not do that without having making it worse. The Committee ended up voting to go ahead and search/seek out some quotes to have an outside firm look at doing it. If it's too expensive or would put them past the December deadline then they would come back as a group and decide at that time. He is seeking out quotes stating there was one that did not want to get involved in it, Kyle Johnson with the local GIS. Polk informs Johnson could provide information but did not want to do anything else with it. At this time, he is in the process of getting a couple of quotes and will then present those to the rest of the Committee and see if they want to move forward on that.

Councilman Ingram refers to the Transportation Policy Committee meeting in which INDOT had suggested the closure of Riggins Road and the Muncie bypass where he and several members opposed to that. It was decided that they should have a public meeting (which they did) and he felt like the citizens voices were very loud and clear that we do not want this intersection closed. Working with Dan Gibson, Council Attorney, they drafted a letter of

opposition. Ingram reads, *"Dear Ms. Taylor-Hendrix: The undersigned members of the Common Council of the City of Muncie, Indiana write in opposition to the proposed project at Riggin Road/County Road 300 N and U.S. 35 in Muncie, Indiana. It is our understanding that the Indiana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration propose to eliminate the left turn lanes on U.S. 35 from Riggin Road/CR 300 N and close the center median of U.S. 35. While this intersection lies just beyond the border of the City of Muncie, the intersection is an important transportation route for the residents of the City of Muncie and emergency response personnel. We believe that the proposed actions may increase the response time of emergency personnel. In addition, the proposed actions will likely increase traffic and the number of left turns onto State Road 67 at CR 350N, which may lead to increased traffic accidents at that intersection. Simply put, we believe that the proposed actions are not in the best interest of the residents of the City of Muncie. As such, the undersigned members of the Common Council of the City of Muncie join the Delaware County Council, Delaware County Sheriff Tony Skinner and numerous other local officials in opposing the proposal."* Ingram concludes with every Council member signature and intends on asking the Mayor and Clerk to sign as well (if willing).

Polk forgot to mention he was made fun of at the Redistricting Committee meeting for the type of calendar he had. Therefore, he wants to present President Robinson with his own calendar. Robinson jokes it even has a redheaded boy on the front and thanks Polk generously. Robinson turns to Clark and relays he could check the fishing time for him (since that was something he initially mentioned during the Committee meeting).

#### **APPOINTMENTS TO BOARD AND COMMISSIONS:**

#### **ORDINANCES PREVIOUSLY INTRODUCED:**

##### ORD. 23-22 AN ORDINANCE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (MUNCIE FIRE DEPARTMENT – EMS).

A motion was made by Green and seconded by Polk to Adopt. Robinson relays they covered this extensively last month.

Audie Barber questions what this is regarding, exactly. Robinson informs it is for vehicles for the Fire Department as well as some radios. Barber wants to go on the record in confirming that the EMS money will be used for these purchases. Robinson states that is correct. Barber assures that EMS is making money then. Robinson answers yes, that is the case. Barber claims that was all he wanted to know. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. ADOPTED.

##### ORD. 24-22 AN ORDINANCE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (MUNCIE POLICE DEPARTMENT).

A motion was made by Polk and seconded by Overbey to Adopt. Robinson informs, again, they covered this extensively last month.

Audie Barber would like to say thanks to the Muncie Police Department for the hard work they have put in on a triple homicide that occurred not too long ago and all of the sudden overwhelming crime in the City of Muncie. He knows they are working tirelessly on it and that that sometimes they do not get the right thanks so would like to say thank you to them for working their butts off and doing a great job.

Councilwoman Selvey wants to thank them as well. It is amazing, the response and effortless and tireless work of the detectives and police force for catching the people who committed those crimes. That takes a lot of work. It is just a message for people to know that if you commit a crime in Muncie, they will come and find you. You will be caught. Enough is enough.

Deputy Police Chief Chris Deegan thanks both Barber and Selvey. It has been a challenging couple of weeks for the Police Department and community. He appreciates the Moment of Silence at the start of the meeting

to recognize those victims that are suffering right now. He assures that the Police Department has dedicated every available resource they have to the happenings of the last couple of weeks and will continue to do that. This does not sit well with them and he knows it does not sit well with the Council or the community but assures they are not going to tolerate senseless acts of violence and will do anything that they can to make sure they keep this community safe. That he can guarantee. The Council thanks him. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. ADOPTED.

ORD. 25-22 COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE, INDIANA DESIGNATION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TARGET AREA (White River Plaza Area).

A motion was made by Ingram and seconded by Selvey to Adopt.

Selvey does not know if this is the appropriate time but is going to go ahead and request Mr. Mick to bring any quotes that he has (fixing the roof or redoing the parking lot, for example). When they have an ordinance Committee meeting (or subcommittee). She would like to see some numbers before that meeting, at least one quote per project and closes stating that she just wanted to make that public. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. ADOPTED.

**NEW ORDINANCES:**

ORD. 26-22 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE AMENDING CHAPTER 93 OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE CODE OF ORDINANCES (Beech Grove Cemetery).

As the sponsoring councilperson, Ingram moves to withdrawn. WITHDRAWN.

Ingram then explains he was asked by Beech Grove to withdraw this because they are redoing some of their inside rules and such. He was advised they would rewrite it to include some of the things that are changing and bring it back to the Council later.

Robinson would anticipate that to happen next month. He then wants to take the opportunity while speaking about Beech Grove, they as a Council have over the course of the last 9 months have done a lot and made a lot of changes at Beech Grove Cemetery. They began with adding a new board member first and expanded the board from 5 to 7 members and brought in a couple of new. Also replaced a couple of others that had their terms had roll off and they just recently hired a new Superintendent, which Robinson begins to put him on the spot to introduce himself. More than anything, Robinson wishes to point out that he has been on the job since a little after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and in that short period of time there is already a noticeable difference with Mr. Waters at the helm there as Robinson recalls going through the cemetery the other day just to look.

Troy Watters, Beech Grove Superintendent, appreciates the opportunity to be able to work there and states he has always had a thing for Beech Grove. They are just trying to get things done. There has been a lot of comments from the community, City and Administration and he really appreciates that. He does not want to take credit himself. Robinson tells him to take the credit because he is about to give credit to the Board in a second. Watters states the guys get out and work every day. Robinson states it is a real point of pride for the community, Beech Grove Cemetery, as it is a historic cemetery where some of (a majority) of the most important figures in Muncie's history are interred. He appreciates the work that Watters has been putting in to bring it back to prominence. The Board of Trustees that this Council has appointed has been absolutely amazing. They are really, doing some great things at Beech Grove with the direction of Board of Trustees President Sally Jo Vasico. Collective hats off to her, Watters and that Board for doing such an outstanding job. They look forward to what the future is going to bring. Watters wants to add that they are getting the chapel repaired and hope to have it open by September 10<sup>th</sup>. He is planning to have an open house for the community so they can come in and actually see what is going on and see the improvements. Many people come and have never been in there before. He just wants to give the community the opportunity to come and see what is going on and what it is all about. Robinson refers to the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting in bringing this ordinance back for a vote for Watters to remind them and the community of that. It really is a beautiful facility. Watters thanks and appreciates them.



**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Eldon Solomon, CEO & Director of The Journey Home, has information to leave with the Council so they can walk away and keep hearing his voice as they leave the room today. The Journey Home is a Veteran Outreach Organization which some might know as a transitional facility offering outreach services to veterans that are at risk locally, regionally and also on a nationally. They work with four (4) strategies. One of them is their transitional facility. They work closely with the VA out of Northern Indiana Healthcare System, Dayton and Indianapolis to find veterans that are homeless throughout the country and get them into permanent housing. Councilwoman Selvey asked how many veterans they have helped in the last three to five years from the Muncie area and their numbers show that they have helped 61 veterans, either at risk or homeless, from Muncie obtain housing here or in the area. This is a very important issue for all of us to think about. There are 1,400,000 veterans in the country that the VA and federal government estimates that are at risk of becoming homeless. They have counted 37,000+ veterans in this country that are actually homeless. Putting those two numbers together gives the number 1,437,000, which makes it 1 out of 10 veterans in this country that are either at risk or homeless. It tells a huge story. Veterans are in trouble and there are many reasons behind that. The difference between the at-risk and the homeless is that the at-risk only have the same fact indicators in terms of mental illness, disability, substance abuse, PTSD and are not homeless yet. The reason why there is an outreach organization is that they are looking constantly in this community and in the communities around us and throughout the country to find the veterans that are in trouble, for whatever reason, that are not homeless yet and keep them housed. This is an expensive mission. Some of their outreach services consist of crisis to disaster relief and the education speaks to the community. Philanthropic giving, whether it be individual donors to corporations and even City Councilmembers, funds all the housing retention programs. They have made trips to other City Councils asking them to help fund this mission. Additionally, part of the reason he is here is to not only educate them on what those needs are but to inform there are veterans in this community that are struggling and we don't know who they are or where they're at. They need help. Part of this conversation today is to ask for help and if the Muncie City Council will help fund this mission moving forward.

Councilman Ingram, as a veteran, thanks him for everything he has done to help our veterans. That is very near and dear to Ingram's heart and he believes that they need every penny that could be given. He asks what it is that Solomon is here asking from the Council as far as help. Solomon indicates they are asking for two (2) things. One, to help them create awareness within this community. There are veterans that need help and the Council can help find them with programs that fit these strategies. If you know a veteran that is homeless, inform them there is a facility in Winchester that can help get them back into housing. If you know a veteran who is at risk of becoming homeless, for whatever reason, they have veteran navigators, case managers, and a veteran outreach team that will quickly mobilize and help stabilize their housing and protect them from the community and to their resources. They have a Disaster and Crisis Response Team and would love to think if there is a fire or some kind of disaster experienced by a veteran in this area that The Journey Home in Winchester would be the first organization (aside from Red Cross and so forth) that you would call. They have resources, relationships and community partners of federal, state and local resources that would help them quickly get back on their feet. Now they are also asking for funds, for whatever they can get. Union City, Indiana gave \$20,000 this year and others have given \$5,000 to \$2,500. Solomon states he is begging without having any problem doing so and will take whatever he can get. In closing, he thanks Ingram for his service as well as any other veterans here.

Councilwoman Selvey states she enjoyed meeting Solomon and learned a lot. She thanks him for that and for being here. She is glad that both the police force and fire department are here hearing what Solomon is saying. She asks if there is a website for members of the community to donate. Solomon replies the website is [www.journeyhomevets.org](http://www.journeyhomevets.org). On the website, you will learn a lot about not only the organization but also the veteran homeless crisis that is facing this nation. There will be resources and opportunities there to donate online. You can set it up to be a onetime thing, reoccurring or also mail in any kind of checks or money orders to the facility in Winchester and that address is there. Robinson thanks him and expresses how they appreciate him being here this evening and all the work he has done.

Jeanetta Presley (and her service dog Bernard) states she has taken on a project here in Muncie for the homeless people. She opened a new Center on July 11<sup>th</sup> and it is all on the seat of her pants. The church, Garden at

Gethsemane, donated the building and utilities for a year to see how it runs. It is the Robert Hunt Warming Center (what it was called) but will now known as the Robert Hunt Warming and Cooling Center. She is not going to change the name and notes she worked for Robert Hunt and it was opened years ago before he passed away. It is going to be open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:00 to 5:00 so people can get in and get cool. She is also serving a meal and explains how the Mission donated some chicken and other additional things. It is all on donations. She has one grant for \$5,000 and that is all she has been able to obtain right now. They will just see how it goes. Her goal is to be open at night time. There was a lot of problems last winter with people getting in and being safe at night so that's the reason she took it on. She wants to see people be able to come in (there won't be any beds or anything) and sit at a table with soup, get something hot to drink and have someplace to get warm. She is thinking 10:00 at night to 5:00 in the morning and leaves some flyers. In closing, she states they will take anything they can get at this point if anyone would like to donate. President Robinson thanks her for taking that on.

Rick Yencer, former newsman and author in Muncie, guesses the thunder was taken by veterans and the homeless because that's what he came here to talk about. We just got a review of some of the money that was spent in the American Rescue Fund last year and while it helped some, it seem to help the government more. He was bothered last week when he heard that the Board of Works handed over your (pointing to Council) infrastructure money to the Sanitary District. Unaware if the Council knew that or not or if that was part of the plan last year because he doesn't remember yet wondered why \$7 million in infrastructure could be used for streets when Sanitary District has its own taxes, own utilities and it has got its own money. He guesses it is just part of the government bailout this fund is used for. He added up the numbers and thinks they said something last year about this that the budget shortfalls add up like \$6.5 million. As he recalls, somebody told him last month that you (Council) borrowed money again. So, by bailing out on one hand and borrowing on another, how is that going to help taxpayers? We're still paying higher taxes and we continue to pay higher taxes while this money that was supposed to be spent for the people, whether it be the homeless, veterans or others, because there's hundreds, maybe thousands of those people. Yencer recalls working with the Church Pantry and a recovery program and knows the numbers that we have seen lately just keep growing. Therefore, again, he knows this is old news here because the Council has already appropriated the money but he hopes to find out why the Sanitary District needed \$7,000 in infrastructure money (because that was news to him). Additionally, as the Council well knows, there hadn't been a whole lot spent for these substance abuse and behavioral health programs too (even though the County is slow to start rehabbing incarcerated people and haven't come forward yet with a lot of help or a lot of money). He will say it repeatedly as people do not seem to listen, especially the government, but this money is for the people – it is not for you (Council), it is not for government bailouts and it is not for other governments, it is to help veterans, the homeless and others out there in this community. He hopes to find out what happened to the money because he knows someone will audit it someday.

Mary Stilts wanted to address the Journey Home and states she really appreciates Selvey and Solomon for getting up and addressing it. She has been over to the Journey Home and it is an amazing facility. They have computer and internet set up so these veterans can get an education, rehab, counseling, drug addiction awareness, and there is just so much. She would love to see the whole City of Muncie so some kind of fundraiser to help that Journey Home and as he said, they help our veterans here too that are homeless. If we can get more of our veterans off the streets and into rehab and get them back to being productive citizens just think of what Muncie could be like. She is sure that Solomon will open the doors for anyone that wants to check it out in Winchester and go look at it. When they first opened in 2014, she went over there for a fundraiser and it was a blowout to help provide all the services for the Journey Home. Please, let's get together and do some kind of fundraiser to help our veterans.

Stilts has another topic of discussion, which is Comcast, channel 60. She states Councilman Overbey can assure there used to be a running menu on that Comcast channel all the time. We need a Comcast representative to come in. The running schedule would show miscellaneous events, like the Fire Up Dwntwn event next week for example. All of these meetings were running non-stop, 24/7. She has a man that lives across street from her that just has basic cable, no internet and no cell phone. He wants to see what is going on in these meetings but guess what; he cannot see any of these meetings. We have too many older people that do not have access to internet so we need Comcast/channel 60 to be back up. Again, she thinks we need to get a Comcast representative in here and find out what we can do to get that channel back up, to get all of our meetings televised again and get



advertisements showing what is going on in Muncie. That way, these people can jump out on a Sunday afternoon, come out, and see an activity that they did not know was happening. Let's work on it, get a Comcast representative in here, and find out why we don't have those going anymore. Please.

Overbey questions if the problem is Comcast, nobody knows. He has had people ask him the same thing. An elderly person down the street from him asked him just the other day. The Council meeting showed up but then the screen just went dark.

Mark Slusher explains all the meetings that the Council and Parks Department, all major meetings are uploaded to channel 60. The only interruptions he knows of since this Administration took over, the most recent one was because of a situation with the cable line being cut by Comcast so Adam in IT worked hand-in-hand with them to get that fixed because it was way above what he understood with the internet and all that. The thing addressed earlier about the update and stuff was a subscription service that the City that ran out and there was no money to appropriate to pay for that anymore. Again, all the meetings with exception of small Committee meetings (that are streamed occasionally) are posted to the Comcast channel. He does not know what meetings aren't showing up but if they are going dark then it's an issue with Comcast, especially if it is happening in the middle of the meeting. Slusher explains the City Council meetings are uploaded the next day while BOW and Sanitary District are uploaded the day of the meeting. Addressing Overbey's comment, the problem is not with Slusher.

Overbey questions if Slusher is saying that all these meetings are being uploaded now. Slusher states all the meetings except for the smaller Committee meetings, for example the first Redistricting Committee meeting. All City Council, Sanitary District, Board of Works and Parks Department, all the major meetings. Overbey states the reason he asks is that there for a while, it was the slides that normally showed up (which don't anymore). Slusher asks which slides. Overbey recalls slides of a slideshow that some of which he put on there 10 years ago like how to report potholes. Slusher informs there are slides that play in between the shows. Overbey is not sure if Slusher is aware but in June, Dishman called him and said there was color bars with no shows or slides. Slusher will look into it but cannot speak to it, as he does not watch it every day. Overbey continues, this month it is black and every once in a while the City Council meeting will show up. Slusher questions that when Overbey says it is black that it isn't working at all. Overbey assures it is on and off. Slusher states he will have to check with Comcast then because that is not on our side. We just upload them here and if there is interruption in the broadcast then it is on Comcast, not with Slusher. In addition, he does know the slides that Overbey is referring to and some of those rotating informational ones were from a subscription service (he thinks) the City obtained when Overbey himself used to do that work. The City doesn't have that anymore. Overbey believes that after Covid, a bunch of Covid slides were uploaded with loads of information. Slusher assures that they have emailed and called churches since there used to be a lot of church advertisement on there. He has followed up with a lot of them but cannot make them do it. Many churches now, because of Covid, are streaming. Even the smaller ones therefore it does not seem like of an importance to them. One thing that is being worked on with IT is that besides Facebook, they would stream live on the City's website via hosting on YouTube where the player would be embedded into the site (for the people that do not have Facebook). Many people, even though they do have internet do not have Facebook. Slusher just wanted to say that the problem is not with the person that is doing the work. Robinson appreciates it but would like to move on and respect the remaining speakers signed up to speak.

Sheila Albertson states she does not know if this is the place to talk about this but informs she lives on East Memorial, close to the Walgreens and CVS on Memorial and Madison. Because of the gas prices, there is more and more bikers that are using Memorial and she thinks we need a bike lane because the bikers are riding on the sidewalk and that is not good because we have a lot of handicap people that go to Walgreens and CVS to get their medications (which is another issue). Many people are then riding their scooters or what not on the street because there is no ramp on the sidewalks to go across the street, like at Elm and Memorial, for example. If you go on the south side there, there is still a curb but no ramp is there for them to take their vehicle off and on the sidewalk. People on Memorial are crazy and mentions how she has almost been hit a number of times. They just do not care and their speed is ridiculous. There is no crosswalks for the kids and it is a very dangerous area for people. She continues that there is also a drainage problem in the area. When a big flood occurs, all of that water comes downhill (her way) and drainage issues then need to be addressed. They had to go out and move their cars around to the back of the house, which they don't like to do and how they have a privacy fence up but people like to go underneath their car (since they can't get to the gas) and slice the gas lines to get the gas. That being said, they

cannot park behind their home and have to park on Elm Street. Honestly, the north side and downtown get the most attention but she is a firm believer if god people do not move into a good neighborhood then you are not going to get a good neighborhood. The yards across the street always look nice and it is great. She has been disabled since 2012 so there is a person that comes and mows her lawn. However, the homes on either side of her are not done up that well and she just wants her side to look like the side across the street. She explains how she has a lumbar condition and can only walk for so long so her husband bought her an electric wheelchair. Well, she couldn't be able to use the front of her house because there's a hill but could go out in the back and recalls calling and talking to some guy about grading and redoing the alley behind her house. He was very helpful talking to her and everything and said they were waiting on a part for a grader but the part was coming from Italy. So, she called again and now he is no longer there and now she is on the waiting list. She notes that Family Dollar is not very far and that she could drive her wheelchair over there but no, she has to go and get in her car to go to Family Dollar. Walgreens she can go to because they have a bench out there and she can make it there. Nevertheless, to come back home, she has to sit for a little bit. There is a lot of elderly people that have to get out and walking is hard if you can hardly walk and you don't have the ramp to go down, furthermore for the ones that don't have the handicap vehicles. Additionally, the drainage. If they had not moved their vehicles, they probably would have floated away. That is her main concern. She sits on her front porch and knows the police department probably does not like her calling but if something is going on, she makes a call. Robinson comments that the police Department actually loves that and Deputy Chief Deegan is in the back of the room shaking his head yes. Albertson actually was sitting on her front porch the other night and there was this guy that walked by and she could not remember where she recognized him from but then it hit her that he looked just like the composite sketch from the Delphi murders. It was the same grey hat and same kind of hair so she called it in. She is not sure what came of it but told the police which way was walking and hopes they checked it out.

Clark asks for confirmation of the cross streets Albertson is referring to. Robinson states 12<sup>th</sup> and Elm. Albertson informs that is close (she is in the middle there). The drainage is terrible there and on Jefferson as well. People are speeding while there are children present and there are no crosswalks for the children to use. There is a stoplight on Walnut and Memorial and a stoplight on Madison and Memorial. She is not sure if they should put a 4-way stop at Jefferson and Memorial... Maybe that would help. Robinson thanks her for coming in and alerting them of this. He knows Clark took down her address and guesses he will look into that. Clark informs it would be great to get her number to contact her and he will work further with the appropriate councilperson. She closes stating she would like to get these things done for the handicap and for her personally behind her own house.

Audie Barber has one more praise before he starts his rant. The praise is how the sidewalk was cleared out from overgrown grass at the end of W. Memorial. It looks wonderful and you can actually see the sidewalk from the road now. Thank you to whoever done it. It looks good. Next, he would like to see the City Council make up some kind of ordinance that none of our baseball diamonds or namesakes for the City of Muncie be changed without the permission of the City Council. He thinks there was enough backlash over the ball diamond and there's a lot of angry citizens in Muncie over the ball diamond in McCulloch Park so he would like to see some kind of ordinance made where some person can't just give \$1 million and get the name of the ball diamond changed (to Gainbridge). That is a big problem. He is not sure if the Council followed it on Facebook but it was a very big issue and a lot of people and family members were upset because not all of them were notified of the change. But, since it is being done, he would like to see the Council pass an ordinance on that so it cannot be done unless it's brought to the City Council. Let's be transparent about it. Let's not just take \$1 million, redo the ball diamonds and then post something on the City's website that says, "oh, we're going to change it to Gainbridge Ball Field, come on out and join us." Barber has another comment to make. He has also heard that the BK Root Beer Stand is possibly owned by the City now or possibly going to be demolished and some kind of office or something is going to put there. Barber's parents owned that for about 4 years in which he ran the business for them. He states it is hard to make money in that place but that place has been there since 1955. He has a picture of it when it was brand new, beautiful place. It still is a beautiful place. He wishes somebody can get in there make a go of it, however, does not necessarily know that it needs to be destroyed for a medical building. If any of the councilmembers have heard about it being destroyed or torn down, let's try to stop it before it does. Once that is gone, it is gone forever. Everybody has been to that place and 90% of the kids that grew up in this town has either been there, worked or

carhopped there. It is an iconic place here in Muncie and he would like to see it remain. Other than that, thanks for the good short meeting and have a good night.

Seth Rawlings is here tonight on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. He wanted to talk about something he has not seen addressed here but is worth taking attention to. He does not know if there is that many concrete facts about any wrongdoings or illegal things going on but BSU Rentals and Middletown Property Group are our biggest landlords in the whole City. The City also does a lot of work with them, in terms of the Southway Center and other projects. However, there has been a lot of complaints. There has even been a Facebook group made about this where a bunch of people are now talking about how they don't fall lease agreements, keep up with maintenance and a lot of other things they are supposed to do as landlords. He knows the state statutes on a lot of this stuff is really hard for the City to (kind of) cram down on this. It sucks to be Muncie because every August we get an influx of about 15,000 to 20,000 new people coming to the city and about 6,000 or 9,000 will be off campus renters. They make up a big majority of our economic growth and beauty. It would be terrible for us to lose students who rent through Middletown Property Group (which apparently just took over BSU Campus Rentals). The more and more this becomes monopolized the more and more stuff like this occurs. It would be smart to keep looking whenever we see complaints because of how big of an issue it really is. It is not just campus renters, as the company owns a lot of property on the south side of town as well. If there is only one owner of these properties that multiple people rent, it is a big issue because they do not have any competition and can do anything they want and treat people how they want to. In closing, he states he believes that if we can tamp down on whatever possible with the laws, if there is any wrongdoings that is.

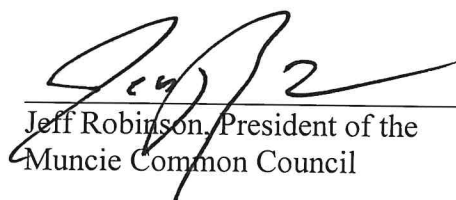
Garrett enlightens that the City of Muncie has a Minimal Housing Code. He urges anytime there are housing complaints to call the Building Commissioner's office and have them do an unsafe walkthrough. They will walk through the property and make sure that anything in those rental properties are up to our Minimal Housing Code. Many times, they take the Fire Inspectors with them to walk through and make sure they have their smoke detectors where they need to be, their electric boxes are where they should and so forth. He believes there are five (5) Building Inspectors that will go do unsafe walkthroughs and write them up. The owner then has thirty (30) days to fix those violations from the date of the walkthrough. If they do not, that goes into the Unsafe Housing Authority where court hearings are held once a month and those owners have to tend to their violations or else they are fined. Many people don't know that we do have that Minimal Housing Code but you have to call to get an unsafe walkthrough to get those fixed. He relays that is what our Building Commissioner's office is for. They will make sure those get fixed. Rawlings states that is great.

The other thing Rawlings had to talk about was how the official 988 Dialing Code went online last month. That is the new National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. It is something near and dear to him as his mother passed away from suicide about nine years ago. He thinks that 988 has a lot of potential. Right now, they use it as (kind of) a hotline for people in distress situations where they can call and speak with a counselor over the phone. It is just stuff like that where nobody is actually constitute in person. Other cities, though, have already started using this type situation to make it like where they have more in-person visits via 988 calls. The city of Denver actually (basically) set up a scenario where you can call 988 instead of 911 and they would send out a police car with an officer and a mental health professional. The mental health professional will go to the door and if the officer isn't needed will head off. They do not find it necessary in a lot of situations especially where someone is having a mental breakdown that is not necessarily violent then we don't need an officer with a gun in the area. The officer probably does not want that either, as they do not want to be responding to all these mental health breakdowns and all these situations. This could be used for the City of Muncie over time to (maybe) start adopting some of these policies. We may not have the funds to send out mental health professionals all over the place but overtime (kind of) use what we have and see if we can somewhat adopt this. We have a lot of mental health issues in the community and a lot of times it overlaps with drug addictions. As we move forward, there has been more emphasis and state grants (such as the next round of READI money) as the Governor has talked about giving money to 988. Let's just see what we can do as a City to try and adopt the best practices in a way that is not necessarily going to break the bank. Garrett comments that it says a lot about Rawlings and the type of person he is to be here on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.



**ADJOURNED:**

A motion was made by Polk and seconded by Ingram to Adjourn. A vote by acclamation showed 9 yeas and 3 nays (Robinson, Ingram and Selvey). ADJOURNED.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Robinson, President of the  
Muncie Common Council



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Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk  
of the Muncie Common Council